

# Livingston manager David Martindale deemed 'fit and proper' at SFA Hearing

Livingston manager David Martindale has been judged a 'fit and proper' person at a Hampden hearing which was held because he previously spent time in prison.

The 46-year-old was sentenced to a six-year jail term in 2006 following drug and money-laundering charges.



Since his release, Martindale has worked as a volunteer at Livingston and subsequently took charge at the club after Gary Holt quit earlier this season.

He has since overseen an 11-match unbeaten run, including back-to-back draws with Celtic and on Sunday they beat St Mirren to qualify for the Betfred League Cup final against St Johnstone.

A statement on the club website reads: Livingston Football Club can confirm that the Scottish FA have approved the inclusion of first-team manager David Martindale on the club's Official Return following today's hearing.

"The club is delighted that a positive outcome has been reached, one that allows us to draw a line under this particular episode and gives David the chance to fully focus on his role as manager of the football club.

"We believe this to be the correct outcome and think it sends a positive message across society.

Martindale added: "After today's decision I felt a burning desire to go on record and thank every single person who has supported me with today's hearing.

"The support has been absolutely incredible, and it goes to show you the power of football and the message the SFA has sent to society by allowing me to continue to be the First Team manager of Livingston FC. I totally understand how tough a time most people are going through with the pandemic and to think that so many of them went out their way to support me as a fit and proper person is very humbling.

"Footballing fans from all teams across the broad spectrum have shown how the game can unite us all/bring us all together in times of need. It's an incredibly powerful sport when we come together. I owe so much to the individuals who have been extremely positive on social media voicing their opinions, and it has been an extremely humbling experience. The petition started by the fans and the media have all been a fantastic support, and I am very thankful for that.

"There have been some high-profile names who have stuck their heads above the parapet when ultimately, they did not have to. Hannah Bardell MP, Angela Constance MSP and Professor Phil Scruton have all been tremendously supportive of my case to be recognised as a fit and proper person. I really can't thank you enough.

"The SFA has come out and shown itself to be open minded and a modern employer which is truly embracing inclusion for all. I think they deserve massive kudos for accepting me as a fit and proper person. I think this will send a powerful message to wider society, and not just the footballing world. You have allowed me to continue my professional footballing career, and for that I am truly grateful.

"It goes without saying I would not be the Livingston manager without the support of every past and present director and

owner. These guys deserve huge credit for allowing me this opportunity over the last 7 seasons. There aren't many employers who would have taken that risk 7 years ago. In particular, a massive thank you to Robert Wilson and John Ward for all their help from day one. Finally, a big thank you to ABW Consultants who have helped steer me through the complexities that have come with this hearing.

"I think today shows that if given the opportunity there are opportunities available to a large part of society who have maybe felt written off previously. There are opportunities available and you can change your life as there are employers out there who can see you as a positive."

An SFA statement states: "The Scottish FA can confirm that following a scheduled meeting between a sub-committee of the Professional Game Board, the Livingston manager, David Martindale, and club officials pursuant to Article 10, it has accepted the representations from Livingston FC that Mr Martindale is a fit and proper person to be included in the club's Official Return."